



STATE OF MARYLAND

# DHMH PRESS RELEASE

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Health Officials Inform Travelers of Possible Measles Exposure**  
***Amtrak Northeast Regional train #171 (Massachusetts to Virginia) stopped in Maryland***  
***August 17***  
***Passengers should check vaccination status***

(Baltimore, MD)—August 22, 2011 – The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) wants to advise travelers who were passengers on Amtrak's Northeast Regional train #171 on Wednesday, August 17, 2011, that they may have been exposed to a person with measles.

The passenger boarded train #171 in the afternoon in Philadelphia. The train originated in Boston, Mass., at 8:15 a.m. and made stops in Maryland (Aberdeen, Baltimore – Penn Station, BWI and New Carrollton). The train ended its run in Lynchburg, VA at 8:36 p.m. Passengers who got off the train before its arrival in Philadelphia would not have been exposed.

“People who may have been exposed should be vigilant for signs and symptoms of measles, said Frances Phillips, DHMH Deputy Secretary of Public Health Services. “Quick identification of measles is essential to prevent the spread of this disease.”

Measles is a highly contagious, but vaccine-preventable, viral infection that is spread through coughing, sneezing, and contact with secretions from the nose, mouth, and throat of an infected individual. Measles symptoms usually appear in two stages. In the first stage, most people develop a fever of greater than 101 degrees, runny nose, watery red eyes and a cough. The second stage begins around the third to seventh day when a rash begins to appear on the face and spreads over the entire body.

Measles is easily preventable through safe and effective MMR vaccine. The best protection against future measles cases is the vaccination of all susceptible persons. Two doses are recommended. The first dose should be given at age 12-15 months, and the second typically prior to kindergarten entry (age 4-6 years). However, vaccine can be given to people of any age.

There have been no measles cases among Maryland residents since 2009. In June 2011, a confirmed measles infection in a non-Maryland resident who had traveled within the state did not result in any further cases.

People, especially those not vaccinated against measles, who traveled on Amtrak's Northeast Regional train #171 should monitor themselves for any early symptoms of measles, especially fever. Based upon the date of exposure, it is possible that symptoms could develop as late as September 7, 2011, if an individual was infected.

**What should you do if you were a passenger on Amtrak's Northeast Regional train #171 on August 17, 2011?**

If you notice the symptoms of measles, call your health care provider to discuss further care. Calling ahead is important so the appropriate precautions can be put in place to keep you from potentially infecting others. For more on measles, go to <http://ideha.dhmh.maryland.gov/pdf/measles.pdf> or <http://cdc.gov/measles/>

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